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1962/09/25

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

At 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 25, AG, DCI and Mr. Kaysen met with the President.

AG introduced the question. DCI then took a very strong position in support of immediate action, reiterating arguments briefed above, reviewed briefly his telephone conversation with Donovan, copy attached, indicated feeling that we should go much further if necessary than the few million dollars for medicine which had been discussed, and stated that the Donovan-Castro contact was an important relationship which might possibly, though by no means assuredly, lead to constructive discussions on other matters.

The President reviewed the political implications and raised the question as to whether we might "hold the situation in abeyance" for the next six weeks by supplying some medical supplies, food, etc. covertly as an indication of good intentions, but not attempt to make a deal on the eve of election which might become a political issue. DCI stated this possibility but that he felt time was eroding and that we should at least have exploratory talks.

It was finally agreed that we would proceed with discussions on the following lines:

DCI would immediately approach General Eisenhower, secure his reaction. He would indicate the situation evolved as CIA and DCI matter, rather than a Presidential matter, that DCI had reviewed subject with President Kennedy but the President should not be put in the foreground; on the other hand, DCI should be put in the foreground in the initial discussion with General Eisenhower, possibly, leadership.

If Eisenhower position favorable, then President would discuss Democratic leadership. Following this, DCI would pursue with Republican leadership, both Houses, and with various members of confidential committees.

Donovan political situation reviewed and DCI explained Donovan position as reported in telephone conversation. President and AG stated they felt if this became a matter of concern, they could request, and secure, resignation of Donovan as a candidate.

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There were no further discussions of intelligence matters except a general statement of the attitude on the part of the President that he felt CIA's operations were going on very well.

[REDACTED]

JOHN A. McCONE

Attachment:
Copy of DCI/Donevan telephone conversation

JAM/mc

SECRET-EYES ONLY

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